

WRESTLING

MOVING PICTURES

Film	Page
THE HEAVE	1
THE BUTTOCK	
3. WRIST AND THIGH HOLD	88
4. REAR WAIST HOLD WITH HALF NELSON	88

To "work " Films 1 and 2, hold the book in the left hand and
lick over the pages with the right thumb; for Films
3 and 4 use the opposite hands.

WRESTLING

CHAPTER I

Why Wrestling ought to be Encouraged

Very far removed from the actual fact is the generally prevailing impression that Wrestling as a sport or as an exercise is suitable only for those of great weight, unusual strength and over-average muscular development. Most desirable is it that I should emphasize that success in this art is not at all dependent upon the possession of these physical qualities—desirable because there is now taking place a strong movement, encouraged by the Board of Education, towards the inclusion of wrestling among those sports and exercises fit for practice by boys of school age.

To myself, with more than forty years' experience of wrestling, as a participant and honorary instructor, as a referee and official of the amateur governing body of the sport, the National Amateur Wrestling Association, by whose efforts alone the art has been prevented from dying out in this country, this



Film 1.—The Heave



Film 2.—The Buttock

CONTENTS

CHAP.	Page
I. WHY WRESTLING OUGHT TO BE ENCOURAGED	1
II. WRESTLING STYLES	5
III. STANDING CATCH CAN	12
IV. THE CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND STYLE	29
V. THE CATCH-CAN STYLE	52
VI. CATCH-CAN STYLE--UPSTANDING WRESTLING	58
VII. CATCH-CAN STYLE--GROUND WRESTLING	79
VIII. CATCH-CAN STYLE--DEFENCES AND COUNTERS	81
IX. TRAINING	86

*This book is manufactured
under Patent No. 447342*

Printed in Great Britain

PREFACE

Although wrestling, like running or jumping, is, essentially, a natural athletic exercise and pastime, some skilled guidance is desirable unless one wishes to be no better than a rough-and-tumble performer. Expert instruction enables the novice to avoid the many pitfalls that inevitably await the self-taught; to gain that knowledge of the wrestling art wherewith he will be able to demonstrate the superiority of agility, quickness and trained knowledge over untutored muscular power; and to reduce by an appreciable extent the period necessary to become a competent and successful exponent. With a clear recollection of his own difficulties as a novice, the author has attempted to present that instruction in such manner, and by such stages of progression, as should tend, given the reader's serious co-operation, to attain that end with the least possible delay and expenditure of energy. Grateful acknowledgment is made to Mr. S. V. Bacon, to Mr. K. Bacon, and to Mr. V. Clesson, who posed for the photographs.

PERCY LONGHURST.



recognition of the value of wrestling, however belated it may be, is peculiarly gratifying.

From the earliest periods of history wrestling has been a popular recreation, a sport in which the English had the reputation of being particularly skilful. Whoever has read *The Canterbury Tales* will not forget the two references to wrestling: Gamelyn in the Cook's Tale (a pre-Chaucerian poem often printed in Chaucer's works), and the redoubtable Miller, who "at wrestling would bear away the ram". To Agincourt Cornwall sent five hundred fighting men, who marched under a banner bearing the figures of two wrestlers in holds. When Henry VIII journeyed to the Field of the Cloth of Gold, he sent to Cornwall for "six or eight tried wrestlers" to match against the best France could produce. And the Cornishmen won. We shall see why. In the early eighteenth century Sir Thomas Parkyns of Bunny, Notts, himself a mighty wrestler, wrote the first English textbook on the subject. Richard Trevithick, inventor of the high-pressure engine, was a remarkable exponent of the art. Until well into the middle of the nineteenth century wrestling maintained its popularity, especially in the western and north-western counties, each of these localities having its distinctive style.

Then came a decline; and the reason is not far to seek. For the utmost expertness in the sport early training—rightly—was considered essential. Hence the superiority of the wrestlers of Cornwall and of Cumberland and Westmorland; for in these

parts it was, until comparatively recently, the common thing for schoolboys to gather on the village green, pitch in their hats (the form of challenge), throw off their jackets, and set to.

Says Carew, who wrote his *Survey of Cornwall* in 1602, "You shall hardly find an assembly of boys in Devon and Cornwall, where the most untowardly amongst them, will not as readily give you a muster (trial) of this exercise as you are prone to require it." Much the same obtained in the northern counties.

The point I am anxious to drive home is that wrestling *is* as much a boy's exercise as it is a man's. It is as perfectly suitable to his physical powers as it is a fulfilment of his preference for "doing something", something more interesting than callisthenics or "jerks".

There are good people who (for want of knowing better) regard the sport as a dangerous one. Well, its exponents will collect a few bruises maybe, but nothing much worse. It is a developmental exercise; one that exercises every bit of the body equally, if strenuously. There can be no one-sided or unequal development with those who practise wrestling frequently, which is not to be said of all athletic games and sports. It imposes no prolonged severe strains upon either the muscles or the skeleton, the heart or the lungs. True, there are moments in a wrestling bout when every ounce of power and atom of energy may be called into action, but such moments are of brief duration.

From the point of view of comparative inter-





national excellence this country of ours has to admit inferiority. Not since 1908, when the Olympic Games took place in London, has a British wrestler won an Olympic gold medal. I will not say this is due to any physical inferiority of our representatives; our island can produce men the physical equals of the wrestlers of any other country. We have fallen behind, perhaps, because of a certain slackness, of a lack of those intensive methods of training followed abroad.

It is to the rising generation we must look if we are to regain—at least—equality with our foreign rivals. And if the movement previously referred to be conducted with enthusiasm (the youth of the country will suitably respond, there can be no doubt), I am convinced that equality, and something beyond, will be a consequence.

What is more, our youngsters will be better grown, better developed, more enduring, fitter and healthier, better adapted to become, a few years later, men of an A1 physical rating.

I am not suggesting that wrestling is an enchanter's wand whereby the ill-formed, the weak and the sickly can be transformed into young Gamelyns; but I do assert, with a confidence founded upon experience, that in the exercise lies the essence of one of the most valuable forms of physical training and development. That its value is now receiving recognition is a matter of real thankfulness to those enthusiasts whose belief that such recognition would come is now receiving some justification.



CHAPTER II

Wrestling Styles

It is superfluous to attempt an explanation of the many and varying styles of wrestling which have developed from the barbaric rough-and-tumble contests of primitive days. I will pass by the *Glima* of Iceland, the *Schwingen* of Switzerland, ignore even the Greco-Roman or so-called classic style (which it is not!) favourite among the wrestlers of the European continent. I must pass over—though regretfully, so many are its fine points—the west country, Cornish or Celtic, style now undergoing a revival. With the exception of the Greco-Roman, which is Catch-Can minus all offensive and defensive work with the legs and with all holds taken above the hips, the purely national styles require the use of certain extraneous material—belts, straps, and so forth, much as the Cornish style demands the wearing of a loose jacket by which all holds are taken. I propose to deal with the Cumberland and Westmorland and the Catch-Can styles, together with a third of very recent origin, the character of which is such as to make it peculiarly suitable for young wrestlers—the Standing Catch Can as its originator, Mr. S. V. Bacon, has named it.





Wrestling in these three styles may be both an indoor and outdoor pastime, suitable therefore for both summer and winter. But Mr. Bacon's system owns an advantage possessed by neither of the others. Even if practised indoors, no mat is required. Indeed, it is immaterial whether the wrestling ground be grass, a wooden floor, sand, gravel or even concrete. Any piece of good turf of a few yards square will serve for the Cumberland and Westmorland style, but if it be brought under a roof, a mat of some kind is a necessity. This, too, applies to the ordinary Catch-Can (which may be termed the universal style, since it has devotees in every quarter of the earth). If practised outdoors, a mat of some kind is highly desirable, as so much of the action takes the form of ground wrestling.



It is Mr. Bacon's style which most certainly will be adopted as a part of school physical training, for the good reason that a mat is not a necessity. Wrestling mats of any type are expensive; one would be fortunate to be able to purchase a mat of suitable size, say, sixteen feet each way, for anything less than £25. Such a mat, although made in four parts (joined by straps and buckles along the inner edges), is heavy and difficult to move about. Also, it needs a fair extent of space for storage. Moreover, so lively are the movements during a wrestling bout that a mat of the size referred to above will be monopolized by the couple engaged. The advantages of a system of wrestling which carries with it none of these drawbacks will be too obvious to

WRESTLING

require emphasis. They become even more notable in their relation to school instruction in wrestling.

Already a number of schools have adopted wrestling as a form of physical training, and in all these it is Standing Catch Can which has been selected.

Standing Catch Can requires no mat because it does away with the fall.

Since a wrestling bout in every other known style is a close struggle between the two opposing parties as to which shall succeed in upsetting his opponent or placing him on the ground in a certain position, it may well be asked how this new style can be deservedly termed wrestling if the normal aim and purpose of the contest be removed. The answer is as simple as it is adequate.

In Standing Catch Can a clean lift, both feet off the ground, takes the place of the throw. And since there is no throwing, there is no need for a mat.

True, no throwing means no tripping, and the art of tripping an opponent is a highly developed one. It is a most important feature of the Cumberland and Westmorland and the Cornish styles; perhaps its highest stage of development is displayed in Judo, the Japanese athletic exercise which is a deadly system of self defence but may be modified to nothing more than a friendly contest.

Mr. Bacon, an expert wrestler in both the Catch-Can and Cumberland and Westmorland styles, winner of numerous amateur championships under both codes, does not assert that Standing Catch Can





is a perfect style of wrestling or that it is intended to supplant the older systems. It is based upon holds and moves common to each of them, and he devised it particularly for the use of scouts and other youths who have hitherto been debarred from the practice and enjoyment of all forms of wrestling because the essential mats, for the reason given, have not been at their disposal.

To suppose that the exclusion of the throw and its substitution by a lift is destructive of all that makes a wrestling bout worth while, either as a pastime or as a form of physical training, would be quite inaccurate. I have taught the system both in- and out of doors, on grass and on a wooden floor, and my experience that boys like it and take to it as ducks to water is corroborated by every instructor I have yet met.

Standing Catch Can is pure wrestling. It affords scope for the exercise of strength, agility, dexterity and staying power. It may be played anywhere, and the outlay demanded is nil. And it affords a valuable preparation for the mastery of the essential points of the older systems.

The rules of the game are few and simple. Shorts and a vest are the most appropriate costume, and (though this is not an essential) the wrestling takes place within a circle of from ten to fifteen feet in diameter.

A lift, i.e. opponent's both feet clear of the ground, takes the place of a throw, but such lift must actually be "made". For a contestant to make



a movement involving both his own feet leaving the ground together does not mean he has a lift scored against him.

A lifting movement may be blocked or checked by the defender, having his feet off the floor, immediately locking his opponent's legs with his own. If such lock be immediately broken, the defender is not "lifted" but forfeits one point, contestants breaking hold and starting afresh.

Deliberate falling to avoid a lift is penalized by loss of the bout, but an inadvertent touching of the ground with any part of the person other than the feet or hands causes a forfeit of one point only.

The loss of three points by a contestant is reckoned equivalent to a lift and terminates a bout, as does also an actual lift.

Duration of a bout is limited to five minutes.

The wrestler who deliberately throws his opponent is thereby disqualified.

Holds are not restricted to the arms or body or anywhere above the hips; as in ordinary Catch-Can any *fair* hold, no matter where applied, is permissible.

There is no tripping, but a leg may be used, as in the Cumberland and Westmorland Hype, to assist in bringing about a lift.

By no means is it suggested that this style is suitable for young wrestlers only. For them it is undoubtedly the best, but the adult athlete may practise it with advantage. He will find that, but for the absence of the ground wrestling which is so





important a feature of the Catch-Can style, it will provide him with just as much vigorous exercise as other styles afford. Rapidity of movement, strenuous muscular effort, are just as necessary as in ordinary wrestling. He must not regard it as merely a substitute for wrestling; it is the sport itself. And it is to be practised without the necessity of journeying to a gymnasium. Any open space of twenty feet square will serve as practice ground. And while it is desirable that the matching of youthful opponents should take place with some regard to equality of weight, the same need not apply to the adult.

It is to be understood that practically all the attacks, holds and moves available in Standing Catch Can have been adapted from those of the standard styles; indeed, in many examples the movements are precisely similar, the only difference being in the finish of the attack—the lift taking the place of a cast to the ground.



Obviously it would be impossible in a limited space to describe in detail how the scores of possible attacks are to be carried out; certain of these are so simple as to suggest themselves to the veriest novice—the Front Waist hold, for example; therefore I have limited detailed description to certain of the holds and lifts of a more advanced nature and particularly illustrative of the possibilities of the style.

A test bout will speedily convince even one thoroughly conversant with other styles that Standing Catch Can merits serious consideration—apart

from the outstanding fact of its simplicity of use. Admittedly the exclusion of the throw leads to a certain circumscription, but this affects only to a minor degree the manner in which the several movements, both of attack and of defence, should be carried out. And five minutes spent in practice will be convincing enough evidence that there is no lack of variety in the "play" possible.

The style is one to be taught as easily as it is readily to be learned, whereas with other styles, if any degree of real efficiency is sought, the services of a skilled and competent teacher are practically imperative. This, of itself, is a valuable recommendation where the instruction of boys is concerned. Fifteen minutes' consideration of the rules will give a thorough mastery of them. They are so simple there cannot be any differences of interpretation of their meaning. There is no doubt or question as to what may or may not be done; all is straightforward. "Fouls" (of which every athletic exercise has its greater or lesser share) are non-existent, but for the prohibition against throwing, tripping and deliberately falling down.

And—not least—this exercise is not lacking in that spirit of competition and spice of combativeness without which any game or sport is apt to be tame.





CHAPTER III

Standing Catch Can

The wrestling novice on commencing his practical acquaintance with the sport will do well to keep in mind the following hints. These apply to all wrestling styles.

Stance.

He must put speed and briskness into his movements and be prepared to act as much as attacker as defender. He should remember in his movements to avoid getting his feet crossed or even close together, and to be wary of placing one foot far in advance of the other. The first and second errors weaken balance, the third will expose him to a formidable grip behind the knee, preliminary to a lift.

Another fault is to extend the elbows wide of the ribs. To do this is to invite an arms-about-the-waist hold.

Let the body incline well forward from the hips, head forward, arms in advance. To avoid a possible mishap, have the fingers crooked and close together, thumb alongside forefinger.

Avoid all stiffness, all setting of the muscles;



looseness means swiftness of action. There should be no muscle tension until the actual moment of direct action.

Do not try to avoid coming to close quarters with your opponent. Obviously, an effective body lift cannot be made unless you and he are in more or less close contact; for you to seek to keep him at arms' length is simply to prevent yourself from getting a useful hold. And should he try to place one hand on the back of your neck, trying for an arm or other hold with his free hand—a favourite initial movement—do not at once set all your muscles hard and stiffen yourself for a firm resistance. All muscle tension means expenditure of energy, and stiffness is the enemy of that smooth swiftness of movement which often means all the difference between an effective hold and a frustrated attack.

Front Waist Hold.

The simplest of all attacks is the Waist hold from the front, arms about opponent's body, low down, hands joined across his back; the grip is immediately followed by the lift.

The hold, however, can seldom be obtained directly, though it may result from a sudden dash forward. Obviously its success will depend upon getting the "inside" position of the arms, and this will be much helped if opponent does not remember the advice to keep his elbows near to his body. The hold obtained, force the head forward into de-





fender's shoulder—this prevents his using the defence of placing the heel of a hand beneath the chin and forcing back your head—and lift.

When joining hands, avoid interlacing your fingers, and make use of the Cumberland and Westmorland style grip, hooking the fingers of one hand within the hooked fingers of the other. If when so doing you have your right-hand knuckles underneath, the grip will be stronger.

Waist Hold from Rear.

A Waist hold may be obtained from behind as well as from the front; to do this it is necessary to force opponent to present his back to you—not such a difficult matter if you know how and choose the right moment.

This is not when he is firmly planted on both feet, rather when he is making a sideways movement. Quickness of action is essential whichever of the four following methods you choose.

A. Catch his opposite arm, just above the elbow, and pull it forward and across his body.

B. Catch his diagonally opposite arm (his right with your right hand) at elbow or forearm and draw your arm forcibly back.

C. Lunge quickly to take an inside hold of his diagonally opposite lower thigh, and follow by a step behind him with your rear foot. Most persons find it easier to move to their right than to the left, and this is a favourite method, the hold being taken of the left leg with the left hand. Because this is the



more expected manœuvre, it is well to practise also the reverse movement.

D. Allow opponent to place, say, his left hand on the back of your neck. Bring the butt of your right hand under his elbow, and as you do so advance your left foot its own length. Now thrust forcibly in a diagonal and upward direction so as to carry his left arm across his body, and simultaneously step round to his rear with your right foot. Immediately you are behind, bring both arms about his body and hoist.



Rear Waist and Crotch Hold.

A variation upon this last attack is the Rear Waist and Crotch lift. Get behind opponent as directed, throw the left arm (if attacking from his left side) quickly and tightly about his waist, and bring your right arm between his thighs. Curl it about his right thigh, and you will be placed to exert a most powerful lift.

Note that when making any kind of lift it is well to preface the action with a bending of the knees, which straighten during the act of lifting and so increase the hoisting power you exert. The more muscles or muscle groups which you can call into action make any effort the more easy, due to the distribution of energy exerted. Always try not to rely upon the arms alone when attempting a lift; bring into play the powerful muscles of the back, loins and thighs.





On the Defensive.

If your opponent essays this Rear Waist lift, with or without the Crotch hold, you are liable to find yourself the loser. You are badly placed for any effective kind of defence. If you try for any hold there is nothing awaiting you but a grip of the arm about your body—which is no great help. If you can throw your head and shoulders forward in good time you may be able to slow down his effort and make it more difficult. But the best defence, in fact, your only real defence, is limited to a locking of his legs with your legs from the in- or outside. By the rules, if this leg lock can be inserted at once and is not *immediately* broken, a clean lift is not given, but the defender forfeits one point.

Of course, the main thing is to prevent the attacker from getting behind, and this is to be done only by keeping a sharp look out. If you are very quick, attacker may be stopped from getting behind you by a swinging rearward step of your leg on that side from which the attack comes.

A slow mover may be checked and perhaps foiled by defender sitting back, even after the body and Crotch holds have been taken.

If when lifted from behind you are able to keep the toes of one foot on the ground and to lock either of attacker's legs with one of yours, curling the toes towards the front of his limb, your position is by no means hopeless. By twisting about you may contrive to get an arm about his neck; if so, hold firmly,



keep the leg-lock tight and hang on. The tension of attacker's lifting effort cannot continue indefinitely; soon he will be forced to relax. When he does—and you need to act instantly—is your moment for attempting a first-class counterlift. Bend forward sharply from the waist, bending the knees also as you slip the leg-lock and get your second foot on the ground. Opponent will be drawn forward, lying upon your back; and by turning your stern away from him, pulling with your arms, suddenly straightening your knees and raising your hips as your head goes yet farther forward, you may succeed in raising his lower half sufficiently for his feet to rise clear of the floor.

A Fault—in Penalty.

I have already said it is not well to get one foot far in advance of the other. Consideration of the Wrist and Thigh hold will give one reason why this is so. We will assume that opponent has made a forward step with his left foot. Now is your chance. Seize his left wrist with your right hand; step well into him with your left foot, at the same time ducking and drawing back his captured arm so that it is over your right shoulder. Carry your own right hand backwards rather than out sideways. As you go forward, your left hand is shot between his thighs and you take a firm hold of the left one. Your shoulders are now beneath opponent's chest, and, keeping your right hand low, you will be able to





lift him so that he is balanced across your shoulders, both feet clear of the ground.

Be sure not to omit the forward step when ducking to secure the Thigh hold. Unless it is taken, the effort of the lift will be beyond you.

This is a well known attack under ordinary Catch-Can rules; it is sometimes known as the "Fireman's Lift", and with it an opponent of much superior weight may readily be lifted. Excellent exercise for the back and loin muscles.

If you are fairly caught with this hold, escape from a lift is very doubtful. Prompt withdrawal of the attacked leg is the best defence. Having achieved this, you will find yourself in a fair position for a possible counter. But you will need to act smartly.

Counter.

Force down attacker's head with your free hand, lean well forward over it; carry your left hand and arm beneath his body, throw your right arm about his body from the other side, and join hands, or grip your own left wrist. By leaning well back as you hoist with arms and shoulders, you may succeed in raising opponent's feet from the floor.



But beware the formidable move open to your opponent—if he be sufficiently quick witted—that will counter your counter. His head and shoulders are beneath your chest, and to turn the tables and bring *your* feet into space, he has only to bring both arms into his ribs, nipping your arms tightly, complete his hold by grasping either of his

wrists, and then lift upwards. Or he may bring both hands beneath his body, seize your wrists, and then try to straighten up and lift you.

Such straightening up needs a fair amount of strength, but in Standing Catch Can one should not employ a violent jerk—though this will be useful under ordinary Catch-Can rules—or the defender may be turned a somersault along your back and fall on the floor behind you—which would mean your disqualification!

The Buttock.

There is a throw used in practically every known style of wrestling; it is named the Buttock—one of the cleverest, most effective and spectacular throws ever contrived. The ancient Greek and Egyptian wrestlers knew all about it; modern wrestlers are just as fond of it as they were. Under most rules it results in a heavy fall, but Mr. Bacon has skilfully adapted it within the limits of his “lifting” system.

I am describing it as made from the defender's left side, but to limit oneself thus would be a mistake. Every pupil who aims at proficiency should practise the attack so that it becomes as easy from one side as the other. This, by the way, is an injunction that applies to most throws. The change over merely requires the substitution of “right” for “left”, as the case may be.

Instructors should insist that learners follow out such practice—to the fuller knowledge of the pupil





and the certainty that his physical development shall not be one-sided.

A neck and opposite arm holds are the usual preliminary to the Buttock; we will assume the attacker has placed his right hand on defender's neck; with his left hand he seizes opponent's right arm. I prefer that my hold should be immediately above the elbow. Holding thus, either await what may be thought a suitable opportunity for continuing or carry on without an instant's delay. In an actual contest circumstances must decide which line you will take. In any case, the utmost rapidity and accuracy of execution must be used.

You need to be fairly close to opponent before going on with the attack; if you are out of distance, the next move will inevitably bring you into a bad position from which there is but small chance of escaping disaster. Have your knees loose, slightly bent; with your hands taking a bearing on opponent, spring off both feet and completely turn your back to him. As this is being done, your right hand slips from the neck to under the shoulder, and you finish the turn with defender's right arm drawn closely across your body.



Lean well forward, your knees well bent. Look towards the ground rather than straight ahead.

The turn properly made (which won't be at the first or yet the second attempt; turning is a trick that generally needs a mighty lot of practice), you are entirely beneath defender's body, which is lying upon your back. As your stern moved below him,

perhaps your right foot will have landed to the outside of his right foot, your right hip will be beyond his body. If so, the turn will have been successful, and you are accurately placed and poised to complete the lift. Your feet will be a fair distance apart.

Completion is quite simple. All that is now necessary is to straighten your knees vigorously and raise your hips—still keeping a tight hold, and to draw downwards and towards your left with both arms. Opponent will find both his feet leaving the ground—unless he is very much taller than yourself and abnormally long-legged. Otherwise he will be very thoroughly and scientifically “lifted”.

Long experience has proved to me that the novice's first essay at the Buttock will not proceed so smoothly and end so satisfactorily as above described. But that is the ideal at which to aim. And the pivot upon which success or failure turns is the combined spring and turn about. There are many otherwise good wrestlers who fail with an attempted Buttock because their turning movement is faulty.

In other words, either they do not properly understand the real mechanics of the movement or they have not practised it sufficiently to be able to command the required accuracy.

That practice brings its own reward. A really clever buttocker is a terror to any opponent. I recall a few such who could be depended upon to buttock successfully opponents two—three—even five stone heavier than themselves.





Errors to be Avoided.

I will indicate the novice's customary mistakes—the things he ought to avoid doing. To be out of distance when making the turn. To start without bent knees, to take the spring from one foot only; to turn with slowness and hesitation. To omit keeping the head and shoulders down when turning; completing the turn with his knees locked; failure to get sufficiently beneath opponent. A formidable catalogue of errors. All can be avoided by a careful study of the movement; attention to absolute accuracy; frequent practice.

There is an exercise to be recommended to all who wish to be clever buttockers. Practise the spring and turn at odd times, without an opponent, but keeping to the correct position.

Take the ordinary wrestling position, feet well apart and in line, body bent at hips and well forward, arms bent and extended. Now spring from both feet together and make a turn-about so that you are facing the direction exactly opposite, and landing with body and legs in the same relative positions as before making the jump. That is all. Repeat as often as you like.



Executed properly, the Buttock is well nigh irresistible; the victim has neither time nor opportunity to evade or to repulse its deadly onslaught with any effectiveness. Applied by a real expert, it brings him to the ground—or up in the air—almost before he is aware what has happened to

him. There is no efficient counterstroke to the perfect Buttock, but such is seldom seen; and the wrestler who in any way bungles the move, who makes even the smallest error, is likely to find himself in a bad way. In fact, in the Cumberland and Westmorland style, of which the Buttock is one of the favourite throws, it is a foregone conclusion that a failure with the "chip" spells certain defeat.

There is more than one serviceable counter—against the ineffective buttocker, that is, but before dealing with these I will mention the readiest defence.

Defence and Counters.

This is of the utmost simplicity, but it has to be used with lightning-like speed. Immediately the defender becomes aware of his opponent's intention, as the latter's body is moving towards him, let him straighten his nearer arm—the left, if the attacker be turning in his right side—and thrust it in a diagonal direction, forcing it strongly against the approaching hip. That at once blocks the intended move; the attacker can't get under his man.

Sometimes the faulty buttocker will turn in slowly or hesitatingly, sometimes almost upright. Any of these mistakes is fatal. Defender has but to whip both arms about his body and lift him off his feet. Another counter is the instant adoption of a lift previously explained—Rear Waist hold with one arm, a Thigh hold with the other arm.

Another clever counter I have sometimes seen





made is performed thus. The buttocker, instead of making the proper spring and complete turn, does little more than throw his leg across his opponent's front, the other foot being scarcely moved, if at all; a common fault. Defender holds firmly with the arm that is across the other's body, reaches up with his free hand for an arm hold, and with a screwy twist brings his own leg (the right, if the Buttock has been attempted by turning in the right side) behind the would-be buttocker. The counterer has only to lean over sideways and his opponent's feet are off the floor.

Double Thigh Lift.

Such an attack as the lift from a hold of both thighs will suggest itself to the veriest novice, and it calls for but little description, effective as it is. You simply duck forward quickly beneath opponent's arms, get an arm about each thigh and lift. The only additional advice to be given is to thrust a shoulder firmly against one of the defender's hips, and get the power for the lift chiefly from a prompt straightening of the knees.



Obviously, the best defence is to carry the feet back and stiffen the muscles of the thighs and loins before the hold has been made effective. Should you be too late for this, a lift may be prevented by prompt and forcible pressure downwards on attacker's head.

Half Nelson and Thigh Hold.

A good lift is obtainable from this combination hold, but when attempting it the attacker must ever be on the look out against defender making a countermove.

Force opponent's head (right hand is the better) down and somewhat away from yourself; at the same time take a diagonal step forward with your outside leg which will bring you to his left side—if it be your right leg which has moved. Your hand will not have left his head. Now get the Half-Nelson fixed. This is a neck hold, taken with your left hand and arm. These are thrust beneath his left shoulder so that the wrist is on the back of his neck while the fingers are along the right side of it. Your arm being beneath his shoulder gives you a certain lifting purchase. This is supplemented by your right hand, no longer wanted on his head. With it you now take a close grip, from above, between his thighs, hand to the front of the nearer limb. Lifting and leaning back, you should raise his feet from the ground.

But don't overlook the possible counter. Defender is not in a necessarily weak position because his head is forced down; his right arm is free. If not quick enough to get in his counter before attacker tries to lift, he should stiffen himself and "hold on to the ground", and so foil the attacker, but at the same time contrive to keep, not escape from, his position. Having stopped the lift, let him





swinging his right leg forward so as to finish behind opponent's left side, raising head and shoulders while doing so. He will now be placed for throwing his left arm across opponent's front and getting an inside Thigh hold with his right hand. The lift follows at once.

The Flying Mure.

This trick has been borrowed from the Cornish style—though actually it is some thousands of years old. It is by no means complicated and, when well and briskly performed, certainly does result in a certain "lift". It consists of nothing more than a two-handed grip of opponent's arm, at the wrist and above the elbow, a swift turn about so as to be facing at the finish in the same direction as defender, whose captured arm has been carried, palm downwards, over the aggressor's shoulder. Lean forward, with a downward drag on the arm, and the "lift" should be made.

Note, by the way, the "palm downwards"; this is important. Were the position reversed, risk of a broken limb would be great, as the strain on the elbow joint would be the "wrong way".

As with the Buttock, should the attacker be slow and hesitant, should there be the least hitch or error of execution or position, then the aggressor will inevitably find himself in difficulties. The lift can be stopped by defender hanging back and forcing his free hand against the lower part of attacker's back; but not only this, defender is well placed



for an effective counter move. To take a rear body hold is simple, and nothing can save the following lift from being made.

Skill more important than Strength.

For the wrestler intending a "mare" to begin operations by at once taking the initial holds mentioned (unless this be followed up instantly) is to give the game away to a knowledgeable opponent. He sees what is coming, and can at once block it merely by gripping attacker's arm with his free hand. So the aggressor needs to employ guile. The wrist hold is all right; it may be taken as a simple retort to opponent's placing a hand upon one's neck. Even if not thus, an opponent will hardly object to the mere grasping of, say, his right wrist.

When the moment appears favourable, make two simultaneous movements—the swift turning of your back to your opponent, immediately leaning forward, and the seizing of his right arm above the elbow, your knuckles outside. Bend the knees as you turn about, thus making it easier to draw the captured arm across your right shoulder. Pull strongly on the arm as you straighten your knees, and defender's feet will be off and above the ground.

If you happen to be of the short and sturdy build and opponent is the reverse, with very long legs, don't try the Flying Mare, as it will probably be a failure, for an obvious reason.

This throw is frequently used in ordinary Catch-Can wrestling, wherein the above objection does





not apply as it will be meant as an actual throw, not a lift; and even with a taller opponent a throw is made possible by quickly placing your right leg outside his, so that you can bring him down sideways, falling with him. Or you can drop on one knee and shoot him forward over your shoulder.

One other Cornish throw Mr. Bacon has included in his system, and a good one it is, though considerable strength is necessary to make it a success. This is:

The Heave.

Allow opponent to place his right hand on your neck. Suddenly jerk his arm upwards by a vigorous push with the butt of your left hand beneath his elbow. At once advance your right foot in the direction of his right and thrust your head, shoulders and arms beneath his upraised arm. Your ribs are against his right ribs, and it should not be difficult for you to reach your right arm across his back, the waist, at the same time bringing your left arm beneath and across his abdomen. Join hands, or grasp a wrist, and lift.



It should always be remembered, whatever the style of wrestling, that footwork is of equal importance to that done by the arms. A proper stance and balance are essential to the success of any movement. If your base, that is to say, your feet, be insecure, or lessened, as it will be if your feet are ill placed or close together, the full power of your arms and body cannot be exercised.

CHAPTER IV

The Cumberland and Westmorland Style

To the native of the fells and dales of the north country there is but one style of wrestling worthy of consideration; it is the above, and there is something to be said in support of his prejudice.

In the first place, decisions as to a fall are rarely in dispute. It is frequently difficult to decide, under the rules of the Catch-Can style, whether a thrown or overturned wrestler's shoulders have touched the ground at the same moment, thus forming a fall; but any difficulty of the kind cannot happen under the Cumberland and Westmorland code, for it is on the "first down to lose" principle.

To touch the ground with any part of the person, the feet excepted, of course, constitutes a fall. If both wrestlers fall together, then the one who touches first is loser. If they fall so that the judges or umpires cannot decide that one did touch before the other, then it is not counted at all. It is a "dog-fall", and the bout is wrestled over again.

This principle of the first to touch is carried out in its most strict sense. Should the wrestler actually making the throw be unlucky enough to go down





on a knee before his opponent is put down, though in the act of falling, the one touching is loser.

More than once have I when making a Buttock leaned forward so far that, quite unrealized, the crown of my head has come into contact with the turf. Though my opponent was flying through the air when that contact took place I have been adjudged loser. And others have been through the same experience.

This style—the "back-hold" as it is sometimes called—differs from others inasmuch as both contestants start with a similar and equal hold. And no play is allowed to commence until the holds are taken.

The practice is for the wrestlers to stand facing each other, but not upright, each with his chin at the other's right shoulder, and then the arms are thrown about the body, so that each has his left arm above the other's right arm. The hands are then locked across the back and the bout really begins. In amateur wrestling it is the practice for the referee or umpire to shout "Hold!" immediately he sees that the hands of both men are joined. This defeats the craftiness of certain performers who otherwise would allow an opponent to join his hands, wait for a favourable moment, and lock the fingers simultaneously with an attempt at a throw.



That trick is known as "snapping", and it is a decidedly unfair trick.

In joining the hands the locking of the fingers,

as described in the previous chapter, is the only method allowed. Interlacing fingers would result in broken bones.

" Holds " having been called, the wrestler may not break his grip under penalty of losing the bout. Under such restriction it might be thought that a contest will be a somewhat tame affair. Such is very far from the fact. True, a Cumberland and Westmorland bout will not as a rule continue for more than a minute or so; but into that minute will be packed continuous action, fascinating skill and dexterity, and a demonstration of agility and extreme muscular effort that one does not need to be a northcountryman to appreciate.

With the arms so restricted, it will be evident that most of the action will either be lifting or tripping movements. Sometimes one gets a combination of both. In their leg work, both offensive and defensive, Cumberland and Westmorland wrestlers are to be equalled only by the Cornishmen and the wrestlers of Brittany. The latter, of the same stock as our " Cousin Jacks ", have a practically identical style, the only difference being that the Bretons wear a shirt in place of the Cornish jacket.

Taking Hold.

A good wrestler will tell you that a good hold is half the battle. Which means that in spite of both contestants having a similar hold it is yet possible for the cleverer man to secure an advantage. Among both professional and amateur exponents are men





who are known as "greedy" of a hold; that is, they will not join hands unless they can secure some kind of advantage. Instances could be quoted of men wasting a couple of hours or more over this business. Happily (and by the rules there is a time limit of five minutes) amateurs are not greatly given to this kind of thing. At the same time, no wrestler should deliberately place himself at a disadvantage by taking a poor hold, and there is no lack of sportsmanship in trying to get a good one.

The right arm being beneath opponent's left, it will be evident that the further it can be worked about his body the more powerful will be the grip. Quite legitimately, your opponent may seek this advantage, and you will be acting very properly in preventing him. To do so, be careful to keep your left elbow well down and bearing inwards. The obvious result of so doing is to limit the movement of opponent's arm. Some wrestlers are so keen to secure this they will thrust the left shoulder forward unduly, taking a sidelong position. But the device is not to be recommended.



To prevent your own right arm being pinned, when about to take hold, keep the right elbow well up.

There are wrestlers who have the knack of "mending" their hold immediately upon joining their hands. Taking hold easily and readily—behaviour wholly praiseworthy!—they lock fingers, and then by a sharp twist or wriggle appear to fall into a position giving them the better hold. But this

is something about which the learner has no need to trouble himself.

It has been said the contestants stand up chest to chest, but this is not to say that a perpendicular attitude, or one nearly so, is recommended. Such an attitude is by no means advisable. On the contrary, as the arms go about the body the feet should be carried backwards (keep them well apart), the back lengthened and the hips raised. Let your weight be going forward; so that if your opponent were suddenly removed you would be in danger of toppling on your face.

And now "Holds!" has been called and the contestants are at liberty to "play". One should avoid bending the knees acutely, as that means a lowering of the hips, which results in a hollowed back, thus giving opponent the chance of taking a low and rasping hold. With this he may be able to draw you in close to him, and the next you know is going backwards heavily, caught by an Inside Click. Or his heel may be suddenly struck behind your opposite foot and you will be loser to a clever Backheel. Or he may be inclined to lift you bodily off your feet and try a Hype on you.

Avoid offering openings for these throws. If the attempt to draw you in is made, try to make your feet stuck to the ground; hang back and stiffen your arms. But whatever you do, try hard to avoid taking a forward step with one foot. The penalty—if a knowing wrestler is opposing you—is a certain fall.





Until you have learned something of the game it is well to be prudent, not in too great a hurry to set to work and polish off your adversary in double-quick time. Walk around a bit, seeking an opening. Your eyes will probably be looking down outside opponent's right shoulder, watching his feet. When you are no longer a novice you will not need to do that; you will know by intuition.

As a novice it is well to learn the more simple throws first. Begin with a Backheel. Nothing could be more simple, yet it is one of the most commonly used and devastating of all attacks. Many a champion have I seen laid on his back by this "chip".

The Back-heel.

Above I have suggested how it is made, but some further description is necessary. It is no more than quickly bringing your foot behind opponent's opposite foot and forcing him over backwards by use of your weight and the power of your arms and shoulders. You have to move quickly to accomplish this; and having made a beginning, let there be no hesitation or suspicion of changing your mind. And take care you attack the proper leg.



A Back-heel with the right foot is seen perhaps once in a month of Sundays; and if it comes off it is more of a fluke than otherwise. It is your left leg you advance; and right from the beginning understand that your heel is to be placed behind opponent's right heel—not half-way up his calf, an error that is too often in evidence. If you happen to be

long of leg it will be in your favour; the stride behind is easier; but take care that you don't overstride. The back of your heel should strike smartly upon the tendon Achilles.

Always tighten your hold as you advance your leg, getting a thrust from the standing foot, and pressing with your chest and all your weight upon opponent's body. If you succeed, both will fall, but there will be no doubt that your opponent touched ground first.

When you are more expert, you will learn the knack of breaking your grip as defender is reaching the ground, saving your own fall with your hands on either side of him. But be quite certain that he is falling before you try this.

An expert wrestler in this style always tries to bring his opponent down without falling on top of him and so increasing the severity of the fall. In the Catch-Can style the reverse is the rule. You fall with and on your opponent in most cases, trusting this will ensure both his shoulders making contact with the mat.

Pitfalls.

There is no known attack in wrestling, whatever the style, which ensures the fall without possibility of a safe defence or counter, or which has not its risks. In favourable circumstances, the attack made with accuracy and rapidity, it *ought* to succeed, but such result cannot be guaranteed. Opponent may have already foreseen your intention and has a sur-





prise awaiting you. Or he may be abnormally quick of apprehension and movement, and on the spur of the moment evolve something you have not expected.

But in wrestling such risks must be taken. If both wrestlers have made up their minds to take no risks, stand only on the defensive—in short, are there not to win but to avoid being beaten—well, what follows will not be a wrestling bout at all, only a parody thereof.

So with the Back-heel. Defender may successfully resist your attack and, having done so, pay you back in your own coin—with another Back-heel, for which he may find himself well placed.

Or, having stopped you, he may lower his arms, pick you up bodily and lay you on the grass with a Hype (to be dealt with presently). Or, having lifted you, he may use the Outside Stroke, giving you a vigorous sideways twist (to his left) and catching the outside of your right leg, low down, with the inner edge of his left foot. If your Back-heel be stopped, then avoid being lifted and get your feet and legs away as quickly as possible.

One mistake you must never, never make; try a Back-heel with your left foot attacking defender's left leg—or his right with your right.

The Outside Stroke.

Another "chip" of great simplicity, but a tremendous amount of practice is required to become really expert with it. But it is worth all the time



expended over it. Though several decades ago, my own first defeat by its agency is something of which I have a vivid recollection. I went down with great suddenness, and I got up wondering what was the uncanny trick by which I had been "felled".

The Outside Stroke is no more than a cut at the lower leg dealt with the inner edge of the foot. In Cumberland and Westmorland style wrestling, it must be noted, the contestants are in their stockinged feet, so this "chip" is not so fearsome as it may appear. A sideways twist accompanies the stroke, the whole effectiveness of which lies in its accurate timing. Used when opponent is standing firmly, it is as futile as would be striking the Nelson monument with a fishing rod; but brought into play when he is unbalanced or in the act of moving, and he will surely be grassed.

The favourite trick of the expert Outside Striker is to induce his opponent to move sideways, forwards or backwards. If the moving wrestler, going to his own right, first brings his left foot almost alongside his right, his base is materially weakened; a combined sideways jerk and stroke at his ankle will bring him down. So it is well at an early stage to learn always to make the first step with the foot that is nearer the direction in which the move is to be made. By this means a wide and strong base is kept.

If the opponent be induced to move forward—as by a smart pull is quite possible—he will naturally have one leg in advance of the other. That is all the





aggressor needs. Timing the stroke accurately, he delivers it an instant before the moving foot comes to rest on the ground—while, in fact, its owner is standing on but one leg. His balance is insecure; down he goes. Exactly the same happens if the defender step back.

The aggressor should remember that when making the stroke his leg swings from the hip, not from the knee.

The Outside Stroke combined with a lift needs no special description; it explains itself.

Clicking.

In northcountry wrestling a Click is the hooking or catching with the leg and foot of one of the legs of the defender. A Click may be used from the inside or outside, but whereas the Inside Click is usually an aggressive move, the Outside Click is a defensive one. Generally it is applied when the defender is about to be lifted off his feet. As soon as he feels himself rising, he brings his leg around the outside of the lifter's opposite leg, and strikes with his heel as low down and as quickly as he can. The lifter, whose weight, naturally, is moving backward at the moment, is surprised to find himself falling upon his back.



The Inside Click.

The "chip" is one that any untaught youth might well use in a hand to hand struggle without knowing that it has any specific name. But it is a

grand means of getting a fall. And it may well be a hard one, as the clicker, unable to control himself, usually falls on his opponent.

Give your opponent a vigorous forward jerk, and his inclination will be to resist. You want him to do so; and without allowing him time to steady himself, you tighten your hold and press hard upon him, head and chest well forward. As you do so, bring one of your legs forward, between his, and hook it from the inside about his opposite limb. Between the top pressure in one direction and the lower pressure in the contrary direction he is likely to lose balance and go down.

The Cross Buttock.

The Greeks had a term for this showy but convincing throw, so its antiquity is beyond dispute. But in age it has lost none of its popularity. Whoever masters it will understand why; for surely there is no throw in the whole category which gives the thrower quite as much satisfaction.

Its execution is less simple than any of the before mentioned chips, and its employer takes no uncertain risks. Great speed is essential if it is not to be a failure, and the complete movement must go like clockwork. Should any hitch occur, in nine instances out of ten the aggressor will find himself loser of the bout.

A high hold is required. Attacker has to turn himself so that his *left* buttock is in front of and not far away from his opponent's right hip. His left





foot should be barely touching the ground—if at all. All his weight should be on the right leg. Head and shoulders should be leaning forwards. The left leg is then struck across opponent's legs, a sweeping, backward movement, and as this takes place a strong wrench is made with the arms, the whole body above the waist, to the right. Defender's legs are literally cut from beneath him, and the simultaneous forcible twist of the arms ensures immediate downfall.

It will be noted that in the above paragraph the word *left* appears in italics. This is a warning against the novice ever attempting the utterly foolish act of trying to cross opponent's legs with his own right leg, having, of course, tried to turn in his right side. Yet I have seen this done a number of times. It is an absurd, hopeless effort. Seeing such attempt made by someone else, even the rawest novice must realize how utterly futile it is. It is asking to be beaten.

The Penalty of Failure.

Expertness as a cross-buttocker comes only after a great deal of experiment and practice during which scores of failures will be registered. But the reward of perseverance is great, so stick to the job. You will learn in time just how far away from opponent you must be to make your turn successful; that if too far from him the act of throwing your leg across is dangerous; that if you turn into an almost upright position, or pause following the turn, opponent



will whip you up in his arms and lay you more or less gently on the grass. Or he may get fairly behind you and, crossing both your legs low down with a leg, throw you on your face.

Miss with a Cross Buttock, and your chance of losing the bout is great. But one possibility is open to you. As you are hoisted off your feet, try to lock one or both of your legs about opponent's legs; the left inside lock of his left leg comes readiest. He will do his best to break the lock and cast you down. Hold on; for when he becomes unable to hold you aloft any longer you *may* convert your failure into a brilliant success. Thus:

Immediately you feel your right foot safely on the ground, stoop swiftly from the hips and again cross both his legs with your left leg. I have seen this happen, though no doubt the success was partly due to the carelessness or inattention of the other wrestler. Be wary then when you find yourself in the position of the lifter. Don't allow yourself to be pulled forward; keep your back and loins stiff and throw the discomfited cross-buttocker backwards across your right thigh.

The Buttock (see p. 43).

This is even more spectacular than its relative, fully as uncertain and full of hazards, but a glorious memory for the thrower if it prove a success. In essence it is a further development of the Cross Buttock, but in the actual throw the legs play no part at all. The squarely built performer, with





strong loins and thighs, yet who is capable of swift movement, is likely to make a good buttocker. The long-limbed fellow, though with less actual strength than the other type, is better suited for the Cross Buttock.

About the Buttock is a fascination greater than that attaching to any other throw, and the history of northcountry wrestling is greatly enlivened by the names and feats of certain heroes whose dexterity in the use of the "chip" won for them enduring fame. There was James Fawcett, a miner from Nenthead, winner of the prize at the ancient wrestling gathering, Melmerby Rounds, for seven successive years. There was no division into weight classes in those days (about 1800), and Fawcett was often called upon to meet giants of sixteen stone and more. His own weight was about ten and a half stone. But that made no difference to Fawcett; however big and strong his adversaries, he somehow contrived to get beneath them and fell them.

Another great buttocker was Tommy Kennedy of Cleator Moor, Cumberland, who began as a featherweight and ended (near to his fiftieth year) as a fourteen stone champion.

Easily do I call to mind a fellow-member of the defunct Cumberland and Westmorland Amateur Wrestling Society in London, one James Fodden, whose ability as a buttocker was amazing. I learned a great deal from my frequent tussles with "Jimmy". Not once but a score of times have I seen him in holds with a burly opponent, of fifteen or sixteen





Cumberland and
Westmorland
Style: the
Buttock.



Cumberland and Westmorland
Style: the Hank.





stone, about whose huge shoulders it was barely possible for the featherweight (Feddon never scaled more than nine and a half stone) to join hands. Yet it would not be long before "Jimmy", agile and active as a cat, whirled in his left side, to disappear almost beneath the other's enormous bulk, and to bring him down, heels over head, with a Buttock throw.

The correct position gained, the proper stance, granted determination and rapidity of movement, one can realize the tremendous purchase that the Cumberland and Westmorland hold allows even to the comparatively light wrestler over one much heavier than himself. The position of the attacker after his turn, the power exercised upon the opponent by the quick jerking forward of his head, unsettles even a strong and weighty man's foundation; and once out of equilibrium, a heavyweight is no more difficult to dispose of than a light man.

This disturbance of balance is one of the cardinal principles of the Japanese art of self-defence known as Judo—which some persons *will* refer to as "Japanese wrestling"—and it explains the hardly credible ease with which a master of the art handles and upsets adversaries of far greater weight and muscular power than he himself owns.

The essential difference between the Buttock and Cross Buttock is that with the former the attacker gets wholly beneath his opponent. Instead of his turn-in finishing with himself looking in much the same direction as the defender, he is fairly athwart



the latter. The turn has been so exaggerated that the aggressor's buttocks are outside defender's left hip. All that then remains is for a strong pull with the arms and opponent is brought squarely across the thrower's back.

But woe betide the buttocker who does not get the fall! All the misfortunes of the baulked cross-buttocker are his, but to a greater degree. He may, if lifted, delay matters by inserting a leg lock; if very fortunate, he may contrive to wriggle and twist out of danger, but his opponent ought not to allow that to happen.

Hyping.

This skilful "chip" is alleged to have been invented somewhere near the beginning of the nineteenth century by a champion named William Wilson of Grasmere. That is, the "standing hype", for a somewhat similar move called the "swinging hype" had long been in use. "Hyping" is occasionally referred to as "inside striking". A very similar throw is practised by the Swiss *Schwingen* wrestlers.

The Swinging Hype suits best the wrestler powerful in the arms and shoulders, and is a more crude "chip" than the standing variety. One takes a low and tight hold, the knees bent, and lifts, at the same time getting one's chest under the other's chest. Then comes a powerful sideways swing, generally to the left, with a stroke from the foot (left) at the outside of the swung man's right leg.





It is a very difficult throw to meet, though there is nothing particularly clever about it; lifted and swung, a wrestler needs to be agile as a cat to regain foothold. A possible stop, and counter, is the Outside Click, but unusual smartness is required to use this in time.

Sometimes the lifter will swing his opponent a complete circle; when that happens the result is a foregone conclusion.

The ordinary lift, with the dropping of the chest below opponent's body, followed by a quick shake from side to side and then a cast downwards, is known as the "Breast Stroke". It is of little use to the long and wiry type of wrestler against an opponent shorter than himself, but it is an effective attack for those of short and powerful build.

The Standing Hype.

By some critics this is declared to be the cream of all Cumberland and Westmorland throws, that which shows evidence of the highest development of true skill in the art. It is certainly a most graceful as well as effective measure for "felling" an opponent, and it is a great favourite among both the amateurs and professionals of the sport. Certainly it is a chip which the tall wrestler should not fail to practise carefully, superiority of height giving one a decided advantage.

The Hype begins with a lift and for this a low and firm hold is an advantage. Before lifting, the attacker should have his mind made up whether to



WRESTLING

attempt an Inside or an Outside Hype; also whether the leg work which follows shall be done with the right or left limb. Which of these four moves is preferable is largely a matter of opinion, due it may be to accidents of practice. A wrestler gets into the habit of using, say, the Left Inside Hype, and consequently he becomes a greater adept at it than with the other three. There is this, however, to be said; owing to the right arm being beneath opponent's left arm, he can be raised much higher when the right leg, rather than the left, is brought into play.

As against this, should the Right Hype mis-fire, the lifter is not in as good a position to follow up with another kind of attack as when the Left Hype has been attempted. Foiled in the effort to pull off the latter, the hyper will be better placed to carry on with an Inside Click, even a Cross Buttock, than if his right leg had been used.

The Inside is preferred by most wrestlers to the Outside Hype, probably because it is more directly accomplished. It is performed thus, the Right Hype being chosen as an example.

Lift opponent, and as you make a partial turn from the waist to your own left, so will his upper part be taken in that direction. At once you raise your right knee and with it catch or strike the inner side of his lower left thigh, bringing your knee as high as possible. The effect will be to carry his lower part in the direction opposite to that in which his upper part is moving, with the result that, your leftward twist being continued into a cast towards





the ground, he must go down on his back without a chance of saving himself by getting his feet to the ground.

When the Left Hype is attempted the foregoing movements are merely reversed.

With the Outside Hype the attacker's procedure changes. The lift is the same, but when the stroke is made with the right knee, at the outside of opponent's left thigh, the action of the knee will be reversed—from right to left. And as may be assumed, the twist that takes the opponent sideways is made to the attacker's right. Similar relative changes take place when using the Left Outside Hype.

The best stop to the Hype, any kind, is that already mentioned—the Outside Click applied immediately defender finds himself being lifted. Should one not be quick enough to apply the click low down (it is useless if the heel strike as high as the back of the knee), then bring both legs together; this effectively stops the use of either of the Inside Hypes; while if you remember also to turn yourself sideways, the Outside Hype is checked and the lifter will be compelled to set you on your feet.

A more unorthodox defence I have seen used sometimes with good effect is to grip the hyper about the loins with both legs. But take care that as he sets you again on your feet your opponent does not succeed in bearing you backwards by a swiftly applied Back-heel. That throw is also open to yourself.



WRESTLING

The Hank (see p. 43).

There are wrestlers who will declare that the value of the Hank is "about nowt". There are others whose opinion is a flat denial of the statement. Admittedly one will often see the "chip" used and the effort prove a dead failure. But when that happens it does so because the attacker did not go to work in the right way. Used by one who has thoroughly mastered it, it is a deadly weapon, as Jacob Armstrong, a northern champion of a few years ago, demonstrated again and again. It became one of his favourite "chips", and with it he made many an adversary, good men and of far greater weight than his own, hit the turf.

It is agreed, however, that those expert with the throw form the minority.

To play the Hank—and get the fall—it is just as well to decide in advance that it is the "chip" you intend to use immediately. Holdal has been called. Directly this happens, turn your left side into opponent as quickly as you can move—not leaning forward as though intending a Cross Buttock, but upright, head and shoulders back. At once you lock his right leg with your left, from the inside, taking care to bring your toes as far as possible to the front of his leg. Holding tightly, you throw yourself backwards, sticking to your man until you both reach the turf. But if you have carried out the throw properly, loosening neither your hold nor your leg lock, opponent will be beneath you.





He—and it may be some who are looking on—will possibly be thinking otherwise, believing that you will be the first to touch, until the belief is rudely jolted out of him; for a heavy fall usually results when the two bodies, glued together, meet the ground. But the expert will not be deceived. He is fully aware that, as the bodies are in the act of falling, the power of the leg lock is such that the defender must be drawn beneath.

But every wrestler who attempts the Hank is not an expert in its use. He may turn badly—partly leaning forward; he may be slow in fixing the leg lock; and having fixed it, he may be hesitant, lacking confidence that the pull on his opponent, aided by the resolute fall backwards combined with the lock, will give him the victory. The likely upshot is that defender does not have his balance destroyed, leans forward, holds tightly, and hitches the would-be hanker forward to a fall.



This he cannot do if the aggressor turns up-rightly and goes backwards without hesitation. It is, however, the fact that many who try the throw do not do these two things. So the Hank has the reputation of being an uncertain "chip".

Not infrequently an interesting situation will develop; the Hank proves a failure and the defender is unsuccessful in bringing off his counter-throw. Then will follow a vigorous struggle, both contestants bent almost double, trips and twists following in quick succession, until the original defender either succeeds in worrying his man

down, perhaps in lifting him, or his opponent, taking advantage of a change of position which offers an opening, gets a fall with a Cross or Half Buttock.

Slipping Hold.

Now and again it happens that a wrestler slips his hold. His hands do not come apart, but his arms come over his opponent's head. In such case, he must do the best he can to get them back again—but not by unlocking his hands and taking a fresh hold, since the fact of breaking the grip, even though still on one's feet, is reckoned equivalent to being thrown.

Less frequently, both wrestlers will slip holds in the course of an exciting struggle. This happening, it is open to each to try to get his arms into normal position, and if one can do so and bring his opponent down, he is winner of the bout. If he choose so to do, the referee or umpire has no authority to prevent him. It is preferable, I think, by mutual agreement and with the consent of the presiding official, for the contestants to loose hands simultaneously and begin the contest over again. But never loose the hands except at the referee's direction.





CHAPTER V

'The Catch-Can Style

The Catch-Can (abbreviated from Catch-as-Catch-Can, which is sufficiently informative) style of wrestling is universal. Sometimes it is known as the Lancashire style—not that the county of Lancashire can claim any kind of monopoly, but because in the western hemisphere the Lancashire professional wrestlers reached a pre-eminence entitling them to claim a superiority over other exponents. They were chiefly responsible for the introduction of this system of wrestling into the United States, Canada and Australia. Throughout the American continent the variety of styles which once flourished—The Cornish, Collar-and-Elbow (about which one reads in *Tom Brown's School Days*), Side Hold style and others—have practically disappeared, ousted by popular preference for the Catch-Can system.

In South Africa is a limited measure of amateur wrestling, introduced by the Anglo-Saxon, and it is all Catch-Can.

Until the constitution of the International Amateur Wrestling Federation in 1921 (now with an affiliation of between thirty and forty nations), the only style at all extensively practised throughout



Europe was the Greco-Roman. Now, however, Continental wrestlers are almost as well versed in the Catch-Can system as the native one. They have named it the Free Style, and as such it is making extensive headway. Competitions for the championship of Europe in Catch-Can have been instituted and are held annually; to such good purpose that Swedish, Finnish and Hungarian names occur with remarkable frequency among the winners of wrestling honours among recent Olympic Games records.

At the Olympic Games held at Los Angeles in 1932, Ivar Johansson, a Swedish champion, accomplished the unprecedented feat of taking first place, at his weight, in both the Catch-Can and Greco-Roman events. Kristjan Palusalu, a seventeen stone Estonian amateur, equalled this at Berlin, 1936, by winning both styles competitions.

Taking Olympic Games results as the standard of comparison, it may reasonably be claimed that the best Catch-Can amateur wrestlers are produced in the United States. In that country the style enjoys such popularity that at the 1936 Olympic Games try-outs an entry of over 6000 was received. The equivalent entry in Great Britain was between 200 and 300. But then the population of the United States is some four times the size of ours, and there is a wrestling class in practically every university, college and high school, and some of the prep schools as well.

As its name implies, the Catch-Can style permits of the utmost freedom of action; any fair hold between the head and the heels is allowed (though





not of the clothes), and tripping is lawful, though this is neither so frequently employed nor so capably made use of as it might be by the great majority of wrestlers. It is a grievous error, but too many of them seem to believe that time spent on acquiring the trips and throws such as are practised by the Cumberland and Westmorland experts as so much time wasted.

With a practical—competitive—experience of both styles extending over twenty years I assert without any hesitation that this is a mischievous belief. The Cumberland and Westmorland throws do not always bring the man attacked flat on his shoulders, but they do instruct one in some of the best methods of bringing an opponent to the ground, while their value in the teaching of balance and leverage is hardly to be over-estimated.

When the British Empire Games were held in London in 1934 the winner of the heavyweight wrestling, a Canadian, owed his title directly to the fact that he was thoroughly conversant with the use and proper application of the Back-heel. His opponent, a brawny Scot, weighing well over twenty stone, went down under that chip like a ninepin.

Without the least hesitation I would recommend any youth desirous of acquiring the wrestling art to begin his education by learning Standing Catch Can. Then let him spend some time in mastering the various attacks and throws included in the Cumberland and Westmorland style; and if he wish to continue as an exponent of Catch-Can (as it is to be



hoped he will), he will find that he has very little indeed to learn so far as upstanding work is concerned. To reverse this proceeding, however, would be very much like putting the cart in front of the horse.

It is because of my conviction that the above is the best advice the wrestling novice can receive that in this book the several styles are dealt with in the order chosen.

The Fall.

In the Catch-Can style (the Greco-Roman also) the definition of a fall is the simultaneous touching of the mat with both shoulders. Should the defender be brought to the mat with one shoulder touching it, his opponent is at liberty to continue the struggle from that point until he can force down the other also. This involves ground wrestling, which is an art in itself. It is by no means an easy matter to hold an opponent on the mat so that his shoulders are in contact, even though the period of contact does not enter into the matter, a momentary touching being sufficient to give the fall.

Not many standing throws will bring the defender upon the mat in the required position, more particularly as one of the first things the Catch-Can learner is taught is to turn himself while in the act of falling so that at least one shoulder shall be kept above the surface. But before ground wrestling can commence it is necessary an opponent be brought to the ground. Then, surely, the wrestler who knows thirty ways of accomplishing this feat is





more formidable than he who knows but ten or twenty! Who will follow the recommendation I have made will know the thirty—and more.

Barred Holds.

In mentioning the latitude the rules permit the Catch-Can wrestler I used the words "any fair hold is allowed". This implies the existence of holds, moves, &c., which are not fair. That is the fact. The rules make specific reference to a number of such tricks—souls—termed Barred Holds. An allusion to these is necessary.

Just as the boxing authorities bar as illegal any hits below the belt, the "rabbit" and "kidney" punches, so do the rules of Catch-Can wrestling forbid the use of certain grips which are not only contrary to the spirit of fair play but are harmful because of the physical pain caused or the injury that is liable to result.



Thus any kind of hold across the throat, which would cut off breathing, is a foul. So is the twisting of fingers and thumbs or of any arm and leg joints in other than a natural direction. Perverted ingenuity has devised more than one of such tricks, successful indeed in causing the defender to roll from his defensive position flat on his shoulders, but in every way undesirable in a contest which is carried on with some respect for decency and fair play and is, primarily, just a recreation.

Butting is illegal; so is the crushing of an arm or leg across the defender's face. One may not (in

England or under international rules) grip opponent's body or head between the lower limbs, and by crossing the ankles form what is known as the Scissors Hold. Reference has already been made to a prohibited form of the Flying Mare. To carry defender's bent arm behind his back and keep it there is legitimate, but the hold becomes barred if the attempt is made to force the hand up the back towards the neck, or if the attacker, having pinned the elbow with one hand, uses the other to force the hand and forearm back upon the upper arm and outwards. This, the Hammerlock, will cause excruciating pain; if persisted in, the shoulder may be dislocated. Rightly enough, the rules forbid the Hammerlock as a foul.

Modern wrestling rules have been made to ensure that a wrestling bout is a contest of wits, intelligence, skill, activity, staying power and strength, but they are insistent that this last quality shall not be used brutally or in such manner as to cause wilful damage to those engaging in it.

There is no need to dwell unduly upon this point, but some reference is necessary to prevent the enthusiastic novice from making unwitting use of methods the possible consequences of which will not even have occurred to him.

Indoor Catch-Can style should never be practised unless mats or some suitable substitute are available. In addition, a mat being provided, the contest should cease automatically directly the wrestlers go beyond the edge of the mat.





CHAPTER VI

Catch-Can Style—Upstanding Wrestling

Choice of the above heading has been made because the Catch-Can style of wrestling combines two separate yet nearly related branches of the art—the work done when the contestants are on their feet, and that which is suitable for the continuation of the contest when the wrestlers have “gone to the mat”. Each branch has its own technique.

Already it has been pointed out that Mr. Bacon's Standing Catch Can is not only an excellent style of itself, and certainly that to be encouraged among youthful wrestlers, but it is also a most valuable form of preparation for those interested in the wrestling art whose intention it is to widen their knowledge by the learning of other systems.



To a certain extent this style is a valuable initiation into that branch of the Catch-Can style dealing with upstanding wrestling—to an extent, because it will be obvious that modifications, extensions rather, of the movements which have for their object the making of a “lift” will have to be made when the attacker's object is to bring his opponent to the ground, if not with both his shoulders touching, then in such manner that the application of means

for bringing about that shoulders-touch shall become readily possible.

A couple of illustrations will make this point clear.

Every single attack described in the Standing Catch Can is available for use by Lancashire style wrestlers, and those directions of the procedure hold good until the final movement is reached, at which point a difference arises: the throwing of opponent instead of lifting him.

The Double Thigh attack is completed by raising the defender and toppling him backwards, with the thrower's weight projected on top so that the shoulders shall be forced to touch. The Buttock, instead of finishing with the movement necessary for raising defender's feet from the ground, is continued by a vigorous swing of the thrower's body from the waist (no change of foothold) combined with a forcible drag upon opponent's upper part which shall bring about his falling to the ground across his thrower's feet. The recognized completion of the effort is for the attacker to drop with all his weight across opponent's body.

The difference in the purpose of an attack introduces other considerations. Again the Double Thigh hold may be used as an illustration, both wrestlers being concerned.

Defender, having slipped or forced one leg back from opponent's grip, has a possible counterthrow at his disposal. Assuming his right thigh is still held, let him drop his right hand on attacker's head, to change to a chancery hold when he has slipped his





Catch-as-Catch-Can Style
Above: Counter to Double Thigh Hold.
Below: Double Elbow Roll; the hold.
60

left hand beneath attacker's right upper arm and so to his back, high up. By throwing his weight forcibly to his right, and simultaneously levering strongly with his left arm, he should succeed in twisting opponent sideways and upon his back, going with him and falling upon his chest as it comes uppermost.

Another counter—needing considerable strength—is to lean over attacker, take a body hold, both arms, from above and low down, and lift so that opponent is in an upside-down position. Thence the counterer tries to get a fall by lowering and forcing opponent's shoulders upon the mat, going down upon one knee.

This counter, however, has little to recommend it as it presents an opening for opponent to bring off a brilliant and unexpected fall. Immediately the body hold is taken he pins the taker's arms by bringing his own inwards tightly, perhaps grasping the opponent's wrists or arms for a more telling hold. Then he sits backwards suddenly, bringing the other fellow into a complete somersault. The thrower's own shoulders are completely protected because they are resting upon the thrown wrestler's face.

So good is this counter that the attack at both thighs is sometimes made simply as a feint by which defender may be tricked into taking the body hold—generally as fatal as it is obvious.

Instead of this somersault throw, the counterer may choose to employ a clever trick known as the Double Elbow Roll. Having pinned opponent's





Catch-as-Catch Can Style
Double Elbow Roll—the resulting fall.

arms as explained, the thrower drops to his knees while making a powerful sideways roll, left or right as he chooses. The traction of his hold upon opponent is so powerful that he is compelled to roll over likewise, only his shoulders will be underneath. Well done, this should be a certain fall. To escape, defender continues his roll until he can land on his chest.



From the foregoing it will be sufficiently evident that the change from a lift to a throw opens up a number of attacks and moves which can have no place under the lifting code. Also, it indicates that one learning the Catch-Can style needs to be very much more wary and alert in order to meet and deal with, to foresee, the greatly increased range of action permitted by this style.

It cannot be doubted that the Catch-Can style of wrestling is a great sharpener of the wits. Unless one is willing to be loser every time, one has to learn to keep very wideawake, to think swiftly and to act instantaneously. These demands will surely bring about a development of that co-ordination between mental and muscular action which is an asset of value in other branches of effort than athletic recreation.

Penalties of an Error.

One has seen in the account of Cumberland and Westmorland wrestling how effectively an expert deals with an opponent unwary enough to advance a leg well within opponent's reach. The Catch-Can wrestler finds the Outside Stroke useful in his style. An accompanying body hold is by no means essential, but accurate timing is. A sideways and downward jerk of the arm on the same side as the struck leg will frequently throw opponent to the mat, there to be dealt with with one of the ground wrestling holds to be described in a later chapter.

Another attack at an advanced leg is carried out thus. Grip the arm on the same side above and below the elbow; turn your side quickly, step across the advanced leg (left crosses left), leaning over the captured arm, and sling opponent down sideways. His leg is caught by the back of yours—at the knee or high up the calf for choice—and the check prevents him from regaining the balance lost by your tug at his arm.





Yet another throw is available. Duck smartly and catch the advanced knee with your opposite hand; lift, get a head or body hold with your free hand, and put in a Cumberland and Westmorland Inside Click.

The wrestler who pays in one of these ways for his forgetfulness can do little besides trying to turn on his chest as he goes to the mat.

Sufficient has been written in previous chapters to enable the Catch-Can learner to understand without further explanation how to set to work when attempting such throws as the Buttock, Cross Buttock and Flying Mare, and also how these attacks may be parried or countered. The principle of action remains the same even though a neck and arm hold may take the place of a body grip or the attack be completed by a veritable throw to the mat instead of a lift. There are, however, certain variations, the usefulness of which depends entirely upon their terminating with a swift throw, which must not be neglected.



Let us take a waist Buttock, which is a first-class form of the throw when you happen to be opposed by one taller than yourself. A familiar preliminary hold—after a certain amount of fencing—is a neck and arm hold. Don't be afraid of allowing the other fellow to place his left hand on the back of your neck while his right has a hold of your left arm; and he will not usually object to your left hand being on his neck with your right hand taking his left upper arm just above the elbow.

This is sometimes known as the Referee's Hold. It is an equal hold.

I will insert here a recommendation as to the stance you should have when taking this hold. Your feet should be withdrawn so far that in leaning forward to take the above hold your body will be at, roughly, a right angle to your legs. Your feet will be well apart and in line. Your knees will be bent. Your back is not hollowed. Not a single muscle should be firmly set; on the contrary, they should be relaxed and loose. Your hand holds should be light—not firm grips.

This position is perfect—in every respect adapted to immediate attack or quick defence. Your legs are safe from attack; your almost horizontal torso effectually secures you against any attempted waist hold. You are armed at all points.

Some wrestlers will adopt an upright stance; their feet are anywhere. They are wrong; take care not to copy them. They do not realize the opportunities they offer to a quick witted and quick moving adversary.

From the Referee's Hold described suddenly extend your right arm, *inside* opponent's left elbow, which, as your arm goes forward, its shoulder slightly dropped, will be raised. The movement may persuade opponent that your intention is to place your hand at his hip—a defensive trick to prevent his getting closer to you. He will be likely to lean forward; if so, your attack is helped, not hindered. Now your right shoulder will be lifted,





so that when, at the selected moment, your right arm is to be thrown across his back, its pressure against the inner side of his left arm will tend to turn him slightly. Not only this, but the whole of his left side is left exposed.

While this has been going on your left hand has unobtrusively shifted from opponent's neck to take hold of his right arm above the elbow.

Now comes the moment of decisive action, when you must act swiftly, accurately and without hesitation. Your left foot moves forward and without any cessation of movement your right hip is swung in, beneath and across defender's front.

As this turn is made, the left foot acting as the pivot, your head and shoulders go forward, your right arm clasps opponent's back, with your left hand you pull hard, drawing his right arm closely across your body.

The turn in should be so vigorous that your right buttock will be carried outside opponent's right hip. As it is completed your knees should be straightened, the hips raised. If opponent's feet are not actually raised from the mat, at least his balance will be severely shaken.

There must be no pausing before the actual throw is made. Pulling with your arms, you twist from the hips leftwards towards the mat, and opponent, whirled across your hips, crashes upon the mat, where you at once follow him. Make sure that in so doing his left arm remains where it was from the commencement of your attack, i.e. be-



tween your neck and right shoulder. This will render ineffective whatever struggle he may make to keep his shoulders—one of them—from contact with the mat, assuming, that is, that the throw has not already made them touch.

The Cross Ankle Throw.

A most useful throw which will bring opponent to the mat; and though he will be likely to fall on one shoulder only, his position will be such that the forcing down of the other should present no difficulty. The throw is not well known.

First take the Referee's Hold; allow opponent to do the same. Shift your right hand hold of left elbow or upper arm to lower part of the forearm. It should be a hook hold, not a gripping between thumb and fingers. Your elbow should be kept low. The change in no way gives warning of your intention, and opponent will be unsuspecting. Now comes the attack—the more successful if opponent happen to have his left leg slightly advanced, but this is not essential to success. The throw can be made even though opponent is taking heed of the recommendation to keep his feet in line—as your own are required to be.

Give opponent a thrust backward with your left hand (merely to cause him to resist by leaning forward, which will be helpful to you), and immediately withdraw your hand from his neck. As you pivot to your right, a half turn, and at once go down on your left knee, your left hand is shot diagonally





forward, across opponent's legs, to be placed at the outside of his left ankle. As you drop to your knee, your right hand pulls strongly downwards upon his left arm, the action to coincide with a smart pull towards yourself upon his left ankle. He should go down sideways, to fall on his left shoulder.

Considerable practice is required to command perfect accuracy, smoothness, and above all, exact timing of your movements. Speed, too, is essential to success; otherwise, opponent will not be taken by surprise.

Practice (as with all throws) should be, first, for accuracy and timing; quickening up your movements will come later.

To gain the fall, drop on opponent as he reaches the mat; the right arm goes behind his head, the other reaches across his body to seize his right arm and force it outward upon the mat; thence it is to be bent to allow the right hand to grasp the wrist and draw the hand towards the head. The shoulder will touch the mat. The other shoulder will be already there, held down by the weight of your body.



A throw simple of execution, but few even among clever wrestlers use it. I suspect many are quite unaware of its effectiveness. But the old Lancashire professionals knew its value.

A variation is to attack the knee instead of the ankle. The same procedure is followed, but attacker does not drop upon his left knee; he remains on his feet, bends low over defender's left arm, and with

WRESTLING

his own left shoulder firmly pressing against the front part of the other's shoulder.

I do not claim to have dealt with every possible upstanding throw open to the Catch-Can wrestler; there are a score more well worth learning, but considerations of space prevent me from dealing with more than a selection from those which the learner will find useful.

One piece of advice I do urge the novice to give heed to. Remember always the fundamental principles of the art; the stance, the need there is to take care of the feet if the work done by the arms is to be really effective. Learners are so anxious to get on they are apt to hurry over the acquiring of a real knowledge of the preliminary facts. If one desire to read well, a full knowledge of the Alphabet is essential. Too many wrestling novices neglect the A B C of their sport. Perhaps that is why British wrestlers do not rank, internationally, as high as they should.

A further hint. Don't try to learn too quickly; don't continually be wanting to get on to "something new". Thoroughly master one throw or attack before you begin to learn another.



CHAPTER VII

Catch-Can Style- Ground Wrestling



Ground wrestling is an art in itself, so extensive that the most expert of wrestlers never lives long enough to be able to say truthfully that he knows all there is to be known. So manifold are the possible combinations that a book the size of the present one would be necessary to allow of detailed description of the known holds, association of holds, twists, leverages and other devices intended to persuade an opponent from the all-fours attitude into a flat-on-the-back position.

A short summary of some of the technical terms in use will be convenient.

Quarter-Nelson.—Place a hand on defender's nape or the back of his head. The other hand is thrust beneath his nearer armpit and forward so that the palm rests on the operator's other forearm.

Half-Nelson.—Force a hand beneath the nearer upper arm of defender as you kneel beside him and thence to the back of his neck or head.

Three-Quarter Nelson.—Fix a Half-Nelson with your farther hand, i.e. your left hand if kneeling at defender's left side; then reach below and across his chest with your free arm to the farther side of his neck and join your hands.



Full or Double-Nelson.—A combination of two Half-Nelsons. The first is made as already explained, with your farther hand; reach across defender's shoulders to fix the other. Depress his head by pressure of both hands. This is one of the Barred Holds, but it is mentioned as novices are inclined to use it, ignorant that it is forbidden.

Hammerlock.—Carry defender's forearm backwards, the elbow bent acutely. The hold—also barred—is completed by taking the elbow firmly in one hand, and with the other forcing the hand and wrist outwards.

Bridge.—A position for defensive purposes. The back is above the mat and body, well arched, supported entirely by the head and soles of the feet. Greco-Roman wrestlers are almost uncannily expert bridge-makers. Some can fall into the position direct from even so powerful a throw as the Buttock, or the Standing Arm Roll, a throw (made upstanding) somewhat similar to the Flying Mare, opponent being brought down sideways instead of over the head. The best bridge-makers have the upper part of the forehead, not the back or crown of the head, resting on the mat. Frequent bridging develops a neck of great size and extraordinary strength.

Riding.—Attacker straddles loins of opponent (on hands and knees); feet are thrust between defender's thighs from the front and hooked above the knees. With the help of a Half-Nelson defender may be straightened out and brought over so that his shoulders meet the mat.





Cradle.—Made by reaching the left arm (working from defender's left) over his left shoulder and under his chest. Next try to pass the right arm between defender's thighs, inner face of the arm being against the back of the left thigh. In part by lifting, partly by forcing the arm inwards, bring defender's knee forward beneath his body so that your hands may be joined. He is now in the "cradle"; by rolling towards your left front you will carry him with you so that his shoulders are brought to touch the mat.

There is more than one version of the Cradle. It may be made on opponent's farther side; it can be obtained whether he is on hands and knees or has adopted the flat-on-the-chest defensive position, but the principle remains the same.

Recollect that the Cradle is not a Crotch hold; that in order to force defender's knee below his body it is necessary that your arm should be across the lower part of his thigh—just above the bend of the knee.



Position on the Mat.

The object of a wrestling bout is to gain the fall. Each wrestler has this end in view. If one be brought down from the standing position and finds himself, as is probable, on the mat in the underneath position, and he is satisfied to do no work other than to prevent his opponent from turning him so that his shoulders touch, it cannot be said that the underneath man is doing anything towards

getting a fall. He is merely trying to prevent his receiving a fall.

In other words, he is not genuinely wrestling, seeing that pure defence cannot result in winning the fall.

To be underneath on the mat by no means indicates that one is so placed that attacking work is precluded. On the contrary. From that position a number of moves and attacks are available by which the tables may be turned and the upper man brought down with his shoulders on the mat. Counterthrows one calls them. So what ought to be in the mind of the man beneath all the time he is there is—how to escape from the position and to stand upright, or to use some trick which will result in the positions being reversed, or to employ some counter whereby the opponent shall be defeated rightaway.

Defence Position (see frontispiece).

Probable success in any one of these endeavours will depend largely upon the position the underman assumes.

About this there are differences of opinion; some experts favour one position, some another. But there is no difference of opinion that the hands and knees position is best. When flat on the chest one cannot readily regain one's feet, reversing is very difficult, available counters are few. The position with most to recommend it is the following.

It is a half-sitting position, though the hands and





knees are on the mat; so is the whole of the legs from knees to toes. Insteps are flat, soles upwards. One is practically sitting on one's heels. Arms should be straight, wrists from eight to ten inches in front of the knees, which are well apart. Fingers and thumbs close together, lightly clenched, pointing forwards. Hands are in line and a trifle more than shoulder-width apart. Note that the feet are close together. Back is straight, head well up. There should be no rigidity, not even tensivity.

With the head well up, attacker will be less able to force it down for a Half or any other Nelson. The ankles—a sure point of attack—are better protected than they can be if the seat be raised as one commonly sees it.

The position is in every way adapted for successful defence and also for making any reversing or countering movement.

The Best Attacking Position (see frontispiece.)

As the attacker, your position should be that which not only gives you the best chance of commanding your opponent, preventing his escape, and allowing you every facility for carrying out the several attacks by which a fall is to be gained, but it needs to be such as provides the greatest protection against any of the counter-attacking measures opponent may attempt.

Go down on both knees alongside defender and as close to him as possible; let your knees be wide apart. You choose, say, his left side. Left hand on



his left upper arm, near elbow, with right hand holding his nearer ankle, but not from the side; let your arm be resting upon his stern. Your chest rests upon his body so that you are giving him the full benefit of your weight.

The position gives you command of opponent. Should he try to stand up or shoot forward, you are able at once to check him. However he may move, you are ready for him; at the same time you are expending but little strength.

A Simple Throw.

From above position and without changing your holds a fall is obtainable. Spring to your feet; as you do so lift defender's left elbow towards your left hip, his ankle to waist height. Raising your left knee, carry the leg to the farther side of his head, partly sitting, so that his head is between your thigh and calf. Draw up his left arm yet higher. Lean forward, moving your weight in the direction of his right shoulder, and as he is forced to roll upon his right side, drop all your weight upon his chest. Release his ankle as he is brought over; this enables you to bring up your right arm to assist in forcing him down.

The Further Arm Hold.

A very evident form of attack and very popular, though most wrestlers try to gain their objective by sheer muscle power and neglect to call skill to their aid. Attacker (from the recommended position)





reaches beneath opponent's near arm, across his chest, grasps the further arm above the elbow, gets a similar cross body hold with left hand, and draws the limb vigorously towards himself, throwing as much weight as possible on defender's left side. Usually a fierce tug-of-war results, superior strength deciding the issue. If the arm can be dragged across its owner's chest he will be rolled upon his right side. Something better than this crude effort may be learned.

Further Arm with Half-Nelson.

The Nelson family is largely used in movements intended to turn defender upon his back. Insert a Half-Nelson with your left arm and hand, force defender's head down and his shoulder up by the leverage the hold gives; then reach beneath his chest and grasp his right arm, pulling it towards yourself. The combined levering in one direction with a pull in the other will roll him upon his right shoulder, and by dropping all your weight on his body a fall should result.

A yet more skilful attack on the further arm can be made without the help of the Half-Nelson or any serious expenditure of strength. Attacker starts from the position recommended previously.

Keeping the right hand on the ankle and so preventing opponent turning away from you, quickly throw your left arm across his face; by bending your arm and keeping it close to his face you will be able to turn his head away from you—an advan-



tage. Your hold is taken at the right elbow. Be careful to press your weight solidly on his shoulders. Pull sharply on his right arm, not directly across but in a diagonal direction. As his arm is drawn across he will go down on his right side. Swing your legs sideways in the direction of his head, keeping all your weight still on him.

Relinquish the ankle hold; this allows you to pivot on your chest, spin round across defender's head and so to his left side. Your left hand hold has been retained until now. Release it, and with the right hand hold defender's right arm tightly above the elbow, the forearm firmly against his jaw. Stretch out your legs behind you, thus adding to the pressure defender is sustaining. Bring your left hand over your right and hold firmly, bearing down, and opponent's shoulders will be forced upon the mat.

The Quarter-Nelson.

Having fixed the hold, swing your lower part to your left (if working on defender's left) towards his head, which your left hand is holding down; lever forcibly with right arm and a fall may be gained.

Other attacks with a Quarter-Nelson are possible, one of the cleverest being made thus. Working from your knees, on defender's left, fix the Nelson, then sit down on the right buttock and straighten your left leg forward with it firmly pressed against his head. Increasing the leverage pressure from your right arm, you should have no difficulty in bringing his shoulders to the mat.





As both hands need to be employed in making a Quarter-Nelson it is not so effective as the Half-Nelson used in combination with some other hold. Remember that in most cases the Half-Nelson is most effective when the hand rests, not on the back of the neck, but upon the base of the head.

The Half-Nelson.

The simple attacks with this hold are in combination with a hold of the nearer thigh, from above, followed by a combined lift and roll; with a waist hold; with a Crotch hold, the free hand passing between the thighs and thence towards the farther hip, the fall being obtained by a stern-overhead lift.

One of the surest combinations is the Half-Nelson in conjunction with the other arm up the back.

Start from kneeling position, left side, towards rear of defender; take a body hold, both arms, low down, left forearm across his left thigh. Tighten your hold; urge defender forward and sideways, levering with your forearm acting as the fulcrum so that he is compelled to sit down on his left buttock. Hold tightly with right hand, reach forward with left and grasp his left wrist. Draw his arm out sideways, thence back; the elbow will bend and there will be no trouble (especially if your head has been pushed against his upper arm) in bringing his hand to the hip and then across his back. Slip the right hand, for it to take a Half-Nelson from the farther



side, and a strong levering movement towards yourself should give a fall.

Another fall-winner is to proceed as directed until the arm is across the back, then come quickly around to defender's right side and fix the Half-Nelson with the right hand, completing the movement by levering away from yourself, keeping all your weight on defender.

Yet another attack is possible, the left arm having been carried across the back (take care you keep it at a right angle). Holding arm in position with your left hand, advance the right knee and use it as the pivot for making a swinging movement which carries you to opponent's head, which you grip between your knees. Now grasp his wrist with your right hand, your knuckles uppermost. Release your left hand hold and slip your arm between defender's ribs and his right arm, which will be conveniently in position for carrying backwards. Take your left hand across his back to enable you to obtain hold of his left wrist. Having secured this your right-hand hold may be relinquished. Defender will be on his left side, left arm pinned, right arm useless, his head fixed. He cannot even bridge. Now stretch back with your legs, easing the head lock, and bring the maximum of pressure on the chest while levering outwards and downwards with the left arm until the right shoulder touches.





The Crotch Hold.

A favourite attack, but not always carried out in the best form, too many wrestlers believing that it demands severe muscular effort. Not so—if one go to work properly. Begin as though intending a *Further Arm* hold (without a Half-Nelson). Having captured opponent's right arm with your left hand, slip your right hand from his ankle to the front of his left thigh; hook the fingers round to the back of it, low down. Carry on as for the *Further Arm*, with a swing of your straightened legs in the direction of his head, and as you do so, lift with your right arm. He will fall on his right side, knees apart. Keep your weight on his chest. Bring left knee close to opponent's body and force the right hand into a deep Crotch hold. The left hand leaves its arm hold and is moved to defender's shoulder, the right foot brought forward and firmly planted, knee well bent.



You are now in position to lift with your right arm without unduly distressing yourself. As defender's stern is raised, your right knee is pushed forward and makes contact with his left buttock, so that the thigh is lying across your right hip. Bend towards your own left, raising his stern still higher and getting right hand farther up his back. His head on the mat, legs off the ground and being forced towards his body, he cannot save himself from being doubled up. By this time both his shoulders should be touching the mat.

CHAPTER VIII

Catch-Can Style-- Defences and Counters

The Half-Nelson may be neutralized by forcing the head and shoulders backwards, rising to the knees and standing up. A possible escape is made by lifting the head, thrusting hard with the knee nearest attacker against his thigh, and making a quick duck and turn to the right—if the attack be on the left side. This may result in a reversal of positions.

To break a Quarter-Nelson, extend and brace the farther leg quickly and thrust weight towards attacker. Or stand up forcibly. Or having extended the leg, turn sharply to your right into sitting position. Turn quickly on both knees to face opponent, and you will find yourself with a Bar Hold; this in combination with a snatch at his free arm may give you a counter throw.

Drop flat on the chest to parry a Three-Quarter Nelson.

The Elbow Roll.

This trick not only provides escape from Nelson attacks, but is in itself a valuable counter-attack. The novice will do well to practise it freely, always





bearing in mind that its chief value is the element of surprise. Be careful, therefore, against "telegraphing" your intention.

Pin aggressor's attacking arm to your body by drawing in your elbow. Turn quickly to the same side with all your weight behind the turn, at the same time trying to raise your head. If successful, opponent will be rolled upon his side, your weight upon his shoulder and chest, and you may be able to force down his other shoulder.

This counter is particularly applicable against a Further Half-Nelson, opponent being drawn right across your body. It serves well against a combination Half-Nelson and Waist hold. Reach with your free hand for the arm that is about your body, draw it down and hold very tightly, and roll over to the side farther from attacker, throwing your weight on him. Make the roll as much as possible on the loins, thus allowing your head to be pushed backwards.



The Elbow Roll also comes into use when attacker, having thrown, say, his right arm about your waist as a preliminary move, is making up his mind as to his next move. Grasp his wrist, pin it in front of your hip, sit back on your right buttock and roll from left to right. If you will swing your free arm backwards while rolling, it will help in bringing attacker over and also be placed for pinning his free arm upon the mat.

A useful trick which may be employed against any of the Nelson family is performed thus. When attacked on the left side, bring the left leg under the

right, force yourself into a sitting position, arms brought to the sides; then throw back the head.

When on the practice mat, the learner should make a point of practising all the moves described, attacks no less than defences and counters, upon both sides of his opponent, as the latter is—or ought to be—as capable of wrestling on one side as the other, just as circumstances dictate.

One other point. The novice, having mastered a particular trick, whether of attack or defence, may find that it fails to come off when used in a competition bout. This *may* not be due to any error on his part any more than that the failure is the outcome of faulty instruction. The quality of the opposition, the degree of skill of opponent, even accident of position, must be taken into account. There are also the elements of comparative strength and rapidity of movement to be considered. A move that failed utterly against one opponent may prove conspicuously successful against another.

For such reasons, practice bouts against an opponent somewhat heavier and further advanced than oneself are more profitable than wrestling against an inferior. Every such contest should teach the learner something—even if it be no more than that there is *no* wrestling device which, in all circumstances, can be declared an absolute certainty.

Instead of fighting to prevent the aggressor from getting a particular hold, it is often expedient to permit this, taking the chance of bringing off a counter you know. This is strategy. For example:





allow aggressor to get a Further Half-Nelson. The counter is an Elbow and Leg Lock. Lock attacker's arm within your arm, and with your free arm get a hold of his nearer leg. Holding very firmly, roll diagonally forward upon that side which has the arm hold.

The Bridge.

Bridge making is an essential feature of Catch-Can wrestling, and unless a performer arrive at some proficiency in this defensive move he is bound to be at a serious disadvantage. In certain circumstances it is the only method of preventing a ground attack from terminating with a fall. Briefly, bridge making is the knack of raising oneself while in the act of being rolled or thrown over sideways or heels-over-head, so that the only points of contact with the mat are the head and the feet, the legs being bent at a right or even more acute angle.

Much practice is required before one can become an expert bridge maker; there should always be a certain amount of private practice in the prompt formation and maintenance of the uncomfortable-looking position. Suitable exercises should be performed for the purpose of giving toughness and endurance to the several neck muscles, which will require not a little time to become accustomed to the unusual strain.

A useful exercise will be to form the Bridge, resting on the crown of the head, allowing the body to sink until the stern touches the floor, then raising



again. Some of the body weight may be supported by keeping the hands under the hips, elbows on the floor.

Another useful movement is to take the position, bend sideways so that one shoulder touches the floor, then turn quickly in the reverse direction to the other shoulder so that during the transfer both shoulders are not in contact at the same moment.

Yet another is to get into the all-fours position and persist in raising the head against a downward pressure exerted by a friend's hands.

Falls from such moves as the Elbow Roll, Arm Roll, Further Half-Nelson, Overhead throw from a Crotch hold, Half-Nelson and Waist hold or Body lift, may readily be evaded by clever bridging.

Not at all easy is it for the opponent to break down a bridge made by a skilled practitioner. He may not raise the defender and dump him down heavily; he may not force a sharp elbow into the body (as was the practice at one time); equally the rules forbid the forcible sliding forward of the bridge maker in such manner that the head is forced back upon its neck. But the attacker is entitled to lay as much of his weight as he can contrive upon the defender's front, or with an arm across the body try to force the bridge down. One of the best methods is to lie chest resting upon chest and grasp the upper arms, forcing the shoulders towards the mat, while at the same time thrusting with the sole of a foot against the heel of one of the supporting feet.





CHAPTER IX

Training

Undeniably strength is an important factor in wrestling, and exercises which will increase it have their value—within limits. Because quickness of movement, activity and staying power are also of great value, and any form of muscle- or strength-creating movements likely to lessen these other qualities are to be deprecated. The big-muscled weight-lifter, for example, is more often than not ill-adapted for wrestling.

Beyond any doubt, the best training for wrestling is that which is to be had from wrestling itself, but the opportunities for such may be limited. In which case, should the learner believe that an increase in muscular power will be to his advantage, should he have any local weakness, by all means let him make use of his facilities for bringing about an improvement. But exercise prudence in the choice.



To one part of his person the wrestler may give serious attention with advantage. With the majority, the section between the armpits and the hips is usually weaker proportionately than any other. Wrestling, no matter what style, makes strenuous demands upon this very part, the loins and waist

in particular. It will certainly benefit the novice if he spend a while each day in going through exercises which shall give greater strength, elasticity and endurance to the middle trunk muscles, especially those of and about the loins.

Not only all bending exercises, backwards, forwards and sideways, will be beneficial, but there should be included a number of those movements for which one lies flat on the ground. From that position rise to sitting position and lean well forward, or raise feet and legs and carry them over the body towards the head; or draw the bent knees up to the body and then quickly extend them, not allowing the heels to touch the ground.

The native Indian wrestlers have two favourite exercises—long repeated deep knee bending (not with heels together and knees widely apart, as the movement is generally made), and a floor exercise in which the body, held up by the feet and hands, arms practically straight, is alternately raised, so as to bring the stern as high as possible, and then lowered.

This is not the familiar "on the hands down" movement, in which the body is kept rigidly straight and the arms are alternately bent and straightened, and in which the hands are placed more forward than is proper for the Indian exercise. The latter is strongly to be recommended.

Even to the boy or youth who is making acquaintance with wrestling in the form of the Standing Catch Can or Cumberland and Westmorland styles.





Film 3.—Wrist and Thigh Hold

I would recommend the exercises specifically useful for strengthening the muscles of the middle and lower trunk; though otherwise the growing lad is in no need of any other strength-developing form of physical training—perhaps I should say of muscle-developing.

In both these styles the contests are not prolonged, and what he will require, rather than muscular power, is quickness of thought and action, swift perception, an intelligent understanding how to make the best use of the strength he has, agile lower limbs and a fair sense of balance. Each and all of these will improve by his practice of the recreation, and the skill of execution he will acquire will give him increase of confidence in himself.



**Film 4.—Rear Waist Hold
with Half Nelson**